

HOPI ARSENIC MITIGATION PROJECT

(May 2012)

Background: In January 2001, USEPA lowered the drinking water standard for arsenic from 50 micrograms per liter (ug/L) to 10 ug/L. The public water systems serving the First and Second Mesa areas of the Hopi Reservation remain out of compliance with the revised arsenic standard. These four public water systems serve seven villages in the First and Second Mesa areas. Arsenic concentrations in the First and Second Mesa areas range from approximately 15 ug/L to 40 ug/L.

The Hopi Arsenic Mitigation Project (HAMP) is a regional drinking water project that includes a new remote well field in the Turquoise Trail area, regional water storage tanks, in-line booster pump station, and corresponding transmission pipelines to convey water from the remote well field to the villages of the First and Second Mesas. A new water utility would be established to manage and operate the proposed facilities. The villages would still be responsible for operation and maintenance of the distribution systems.

In January 2012, the Hopi Tribe filed a complaint against the United States, acting through the BIA, for failure to supply sufficient and adequate water to the Hopi Reservation. The claim stated that the water supply in the affected villages in the eastern part of the Hopi Reservation, which is the First and Second Mesa areas, has consistently contained arsenic that exceeds the MCL. The claim's request for damages totaled \$20 million, which is roughly the estimated cost to construct the HAMP.

Outstanding Issues: Additional funding is needed to fund the various phases of the project. Since 2006, the Hopi Tribe has received approximately \$3 million of USEPA Drinking Water Tribal Set-Aside (DWTSA) funding for the HAMP. An additional \$800,000 of DWTSA funding is expected in FY 2013. The Indian Health Service (IHS) has contributed approximately \$800,000 to the project to date.

Because no one agency can fully fund the HAMP, the project has been a multi-agency effort involving the Hopi Tribe, the affected villages (through their respective Community Services Administrators), USEPA, IHS, HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs), BIE (Bureau of Indian Education), and USDA-RD (U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development).

The goal is to have the HAMP completed by January 2015.

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